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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON **TERUMAH** - 5772

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As I have stressed many times in these studies, the Torah was meant to be listened to, not read. The eye can scan many lines at once; but listening is always a sequential, word-by-word process. The result is that the ear can sometimes hear a discrepancy that the eye misses. A discrepancy is always significant when it comes to Torah. Like a discord in a work by Mozart, or the asymmetrical background to Leonardo's Mona Lisa, it is meant to draw attention to something, to launch reverberations of complexity, to add depth to an otherwise superficial response. So it is in the apparently prosaic details of the construction of the Tabernacle. One item is incongruous, though it is a matter of only two letters in the text.

One by one, G-d instructs Moses in the making of the sanctuary and its appurtenances. In each case the verb is in the second person singular: ve-tzipita, ve-asita, ve-yatzakta, ve-natata, ve-heveta, "you shall cover . . . you shall make . . . you shall pour . . . you shall place . . . you shall bring." There is one exception, namely the ark. Here the verb is in the third person plural: ve-asu aron atzei shittim, "They shall make an ark of acacia wood." 1 Why "they" not "you"? Why the shift from the singular to the plural? The answer of the sages is profound.

The ark contained the tablets of stone given to Moses by G-d at Mount Sinai. I Kings 8:9 makes this clear:

There was nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites after they came out of Egypt.

The Torah here calls the tablets "the testimony" ("And you shall put into the ark the testimony which I will give you") since they were the physical symbol of the Sinai covenant. According to the sages, "both the [complete second set of] tablets and the fragments of the [first] tablets [which Moses broke after the Golden Calf] were in the ark."

(Incidentally, the sages learned from this that one must always respect an elderly scholar, even though he has forgotten his learning, since both the whole and the broken tablets were given equal respect by being carried in the ark). 3 The ark, in short, symbolized Torah.

The reason, therefore, that the construction of the ark was commanded in the plural is that everyone was to have a share in it:

Rabbi Judah son of R. Shalom said: The Holy One blessed be He, said, "Let them all come and occupy themselves with the ark in order that they may all merit the Torah."

Unlike other aspects of service in the sanctuary or temple, Torah was the heritage of everyone. All Israel were parties to the covenant. All were expected to know and study its terms. Judaism might know other hierarchies, but when it came to knowledge, study and the dignity conferred by scholarship, everyone stood on equal footing.

Judaism is a profoundly egalitarian faith. As the historian Norman Gottwald puts it:

"The Chosen People" is the distinctive self-consciousness of a society of the equals created in the intertribal order and demarcated from a primarily centralised and stratified surrounding world. Covenant is the bonding of de-centralised social groups in a larger society of equals committed to co-operation without authoritarian leadership and a way of symbolising the locus of sovereignty in such a society of equals . . . Israel thought it was different because it was different: it constituted an egalitarian social system in the midst of stratified societies . . .

In the American Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson translated this idea into the famous words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness . . ." What is interesting about this sentence is that "these truths" are anything but self-evident. They would have been regarded as subversive by Plato, who held that humanity is divided into people of gold, silver and bronze and that hierarchy is written into the structure of society. They would have been incomprehensible to Aristotle who believed that some were born to rule and others to be ruled. They are "self-evident" only to one steeped in the Bible.

But any attempt at creating an egalitarian society runs up against the perennial difficulty that people are born unequal in talents, endowments and natural abilities, as well as in their early environment. Communism, like every other attempt to enforce equality, ends up by demanding an unacceptable price in terms of liberty. How then can a society be free and equal at the same time?

To my mind, no civilization has ever come closer to creating such a society than the people of the covenant - and it did so in a way still unrivalled in its insight and depth. Physical goods - wealth and power -

always represent, at least in the short-term, zero-sum games. The more I give away, the less I have. For that reason they are always arenas of conflict, in which there are winners and losers. Political and economic systems therefore play the important function of mediating conflict by the imposition of rules (such as elections in the case of democracy, exchange in the case of market economies). In this way, competition does not degenerate into anarchy. That is the necessity for, and the glory, of politics and economics. But they do not create equality.

Spiritual (sometimes called social or public) goods, however, have a different logic. They are non-zero-sum games. The more love, or influence, or trust I give away the more I have. That is because they are goods the existence of which depends on being shared. They give rise to structures of co-operation, not competition. It has been one of the great discoveries of sociobiology on the one hand, "civil society" or "communitarian" political thought on the other, that the survival of any group depends at least as much on co-operation as competition. No individual, however strong or gifted, can rival the achievements of a group in which each contributes his or her talents to an orchestrated, collective endeavour. On this, Aristotle and the Rambam agreed: homo sapiens is, above all, a social animal whose very existence depends on specialization, co-operation and trust.

It was the genius of Judaism to see that the primary social good is knowledge. The simplest and most effective way of creating a society of equal dignity is to make knowledge equally accessible to all. The symbol of this was the ark, the container of the most important of all bodies of knowledge, namely the Torah: the written constitution of Israel as a nation under the sovereignty of G-d. If everyone has a knowledge of the law, then everyone is, in the fullest sense, a citizen (one could almost say that Israel is defined as a nation of constitutional lawyers). Knowledge, said Bacon, is power; and if knowledge is distributed equally, so too is power. That is why, here alone in its list of the component parts of the sanctuary, the Torah shifts from the second person singular to the third person plural. When it comes to the ark, home and symbol of the most significant form of knowledge, everyone must have an equal share.

On no other subject were the sages more eloquent. The midrashic passage quoted above goes on to state in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai:

There are three crowns: the crown of kingship, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of Torah. The crown of kingship - this is the table . . . the crown of priesthood - this is the altar . . . the crown of Torah - this is the ark . . . Why does it say of the rest [of the items of the Tabernacle] "And you shall make" whereas of the ark it says, "And they shall make"? To teach you that the crown of Torah stands above all. When one has acquired the Torah it is as if he has acquired all the rest.

Or as Maimonides formulates it:

With three crowns was Israel crowned -- the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingship. The crown of priesthood was conferred on Aaron . . . The crown of kingship was conferred on David . . . But the crown of Torah is for all Israel . . . Whoever desires it, let him come and take it.

In a yet more striking statement, the sages ruled:

A bastard who is a scholar takes precedence over an ignorant high priest, for it is said, "More precious is it than rubies [peninim]" - meaning that [one who is wise] is more precious than the High Priest who enters the innermost sanctuary [lifnay ve-lifnim].

These are usually political statements. They reflect the fact that biblical Israel was not a wholly egalitarian society. Initially, the firstborn in each family was to have become a priest, but after the Golden Calf that role was transferred to a single tribe, Levi, and a single family within the tribe, namely the sons of Aaron.

Initially, Israel did not have a monarchy. Throughout the long period covered by the Book of Judges it existed as a confederation of tribes without a political leader. At times of crisis individuals would emerge

known as "judges" who would lead the people in battle, but they had no formal office or succession. Eventually in the days of Samuel the people asked for, and were given, a king.

So hierarchy existed as of necessity in the case of both the "crown" (domain) of priesthood and kingship. In a vaulting leap of imagination, however, the sages saw that the very collapse of Israel, during the first and second centuries of the common era, paved the way for a full implementation of the biblical ideal, a society of equals. Now there were no more kings or (functioning) priests. Only the "crown of Torah" remained. By creating, in the days of Joshua ben Gamla, the world's first system of universal compulsory education, they were able to lay the foundations of a national identity built on literacy, study and the life of the mind. The "ark" was indeed the property of all.

To be sure, even then there were temptations (when are there not?) for those well versed in Torah to hold themselves superior to others, the ammei ha-aretz (the ignorant, those who had not mastered the texts). Yet this sense of superiority was always answerable to the fact that the sages knew, in their heart of hearts, that learning was not the preserve of an elite. Two stories from the Talmud illustrate this with great poignancy. Here is the first:

Once Rabbi Jannai was walking along the way, when he met a man who was handsomely attired. He said to him, "Would the master mind being my guest?" He replied, "As you please." He then took him home and questioned him on Bible, but he knew nothing; on Mishna, but he knew nothing; on Talmud, but he knew nothing; on Aggadah, but he knew nothing. Finally he asked him to say grace. He replied, however, "Let Jannai say grace in his house." He then asked him, "Can you repeat what I tell you?" He answered, "Yes." He then exclaimed, "Say, A dog has eaten Jannai's bread." At this point the guest rose and seized him, demanding, "What of my inheritance with you, that you are cheating me?" "What inheritance of yours do I have?" asked R. Jannai. He replied, "The children recite, 'Moses commanded us the Torah, an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.' It is not written here 'congregation of Jannai' but 'congregation of Jacob.'" At this, they became reconciled.

Rabbi Jannai mistakenly assumed that from the man's impressive appearance, he was a scholar. On finding that he was ignorant, he treated him with contempt. However, the stranger defeated the rabbi on a simple point of Jewish principle. The Torah is the inheritance of the entire congregation, not of an aristocracy of scholars. The fact that Rabbi Jannai was forced to concede the point demonstrates its power.

The second story concerns the temporary removal from office of the Nasi (religious head of the community) Rabban Gamliel. As leader, Rabban Gamliel had adopted an exclusive approach to the house of study. He insisted that only those whose "inside was like their outside" - whose integrity was unchallengeable - were permitted to enter. The Talmud states that when he was deposed, the doors of the house of study were opened to all.

On that day, many benches were added . . . Rabban Gamliel became alarmed and said, "Perhaps, G-d forbid, I withheld Torah from Israel." He was shown in a dream, white casks full of ashes [suggesting that those to whom he refused entry were in fact unworthy of a place in the house of study]. This however was not so. He was only shown the dream to set his mind at ease.

Rabban Gamliel's exclusivism was wrong. The doors of the house of study should be open to everyone. As Maimonides said, "whoever desires [the crown of Torah], let him come and take it."

This ideal was part of Judaism throughout the ages. The prophet Isaiah insisted, "All your children shall be taught by the Lord, and great will be your children's peace." 10 Many centuries later, in the first century C.E. Josephus could write, "Should any one of our nation be asked about our laws, he will repeat them as readily as his own name. The result of our thorough education in our laws from the very dawn of intelligence is that they are, as it were, engraved on our souls." A 12th century monk wrote

in one of his commentaries, "A Jew, however poor, if he had ten sons, would put them all to letters, not for gain, as the Christians do, but for the understanding of G-d's Law; and not only his sons but his daughters too."

With a touch of exaggeration, the historian Paul Johnson calls Judaism an "ancient and highly efficient social machine for the production of intellectuals." It was, of course, not the production of intellectuals that motivated the Judaic love of learning, but rather the idea that a society structured around divine law should be one in which everyone had equal access to knowledge and therefore equal dignity as citizens in the republic of faith. It was, and remains, a beautiful idea, hinted at for the first time in the simple, yet resonant detail that though all else in the tabernacle was constructed by individuals ("you"), the Ark belonged to everyone ("they"). Seldom has so slight a nuance signaled so high an ethical and intellectual ideal.

From TorahWeb <torahweb@torahweb.org>

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Rabbi Mordechai Willig

Gladness and Joy

"The Jews had gladness (simcha) and joy (sason)" (Esther 8:16). Simcha is yom tov, as it says "You shall be happy on your holiday" (Devarim 16:14). Sason is milah, as it says "I rejoice over your word" (Tehillim 119:162) (Megila 16b).

Perhaps the nuanced distinction between the two synonyms, simcha and sason, is based on their etymological cognates. In his commentary on Tehillim (14:7), Rabbi S. R. Hirsch links the root of sameach with the word tzemach, flower. A flower blossoms beautifully. Large petals grow on a flower each spring, the peak of vegetative splendor. However, in a fairly short while, the petals fall or wither, their beauty reduced to a cherished, sometimes distant, memory.

By contrast, the root of sason - sas - is related to tzitz, budding. "It brought forth a blossom, it sprouted a bud" (Bamidbar 17:23). The bud may sprout either before or after the blossom, but always lasts much longer and eventually becomes a fruit (Rashi and Sifsei Chachamim). When the two synonyms are juxtaposed, simcha, like a flower, represents a peak of happiness; it is intense, and, by definition, short-lived [R Hirsch disagrees with this point]. Therefore, simcha refers to yom tov, an intense, but fairly brief, period of happiness.

Sason, like a bud, is much smaller than simcha, a flower, but is much longer lasting. Therefore sason refers to mila, the only mitzvah which endures throughout a man's lifetime. David HaMelech rejoiced over mila, which comforted him in the bathhouse when he was naked of all other mitzvos (Rashi Shabbos 130a, based on Menachos 43b). Moreover, mila, which was accepted with joy, is still performed with joy (Shabbos 130a).

When Adar begins, we increase simcha (Taanis 29a). Purim and Pesach are highlights of the Jewish calendar, celebrating great miracles (Rashi) with peaks of happiness. As we enter Adar and increase simcha, we must also focus on sason, the more muted and enduring type of joy. In fact, the gemara (Shabbos 88a) understands, based on "kiymu v'kiblu haYehudim" (Esther 9:27), that Purim is a day of kabbolas haTorah. On Purim the Jews joyfully accepted the Torah without the coercion that was present at Sinai. The joy of accepting and learning Torah uniquely combines the intensity of simcha and the enduring nature of sason. Thus this season is a perfect time to recommit ourselves to learning Torah. In every province and in every city, the Jews had gladness and joy (Esther 8:17). Kain tihye lanu - so may it be for us.

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The Shining Gem

Uri Schneider

I. *Parshat Terumah* is, at first glance, the anti-thesis of a morally based and exciting story. It is filled with measurements and descriptions of holy utensils used for the *Beit Hamikdash*. It may appear very challenging to glean any practical message from these *Pesukim*.

Chazal, however, say that every single *pasuk* is saturated with its own message. To further prove their point, *Chazal* quote the *pasuk* "And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son (Bereishit 36:12)", a seemingly pointless *pasuk* since Timna has no overall relevance in *Chumash Bereishit*. However, by looking ten *pasukim* later into the *Chumash* we see that "and Lotan's sister was Timna." The *Chumash* previously stated that Lotan was a prince that extended from a very prestigious genealogy. Since Timna was the sister of Lotan, she herself was a person of high stature. Nonetheless, she became part of Eliphaz's family instead of marrying a prominent king. To finalize the message, *Chazal* explain that these two *pasukim* reveal to us the honor and glory of being part of *Am Yisrael*. Timna disregarded her entire heritage in order to marry Eliphaz, the great-grandson of Avraham Avinu.

Searching through *Terumah* with *Chazal's* keen insight may help clarify any hazy messages.

II. The *Malbim* accounts for the order of events in the parsha. The first *Kelim* listed in the parsha are the *Aron*, *Shulchan*, and *Menorah* because they existed in the times of *Bayit Rishon* and *Bayit Sheni*. The Torah then lists the *Heichal* and *Kodesh HaKodashim*, noting that there should be a *parochet* separating the *Kodesh* and the *Kodesh Hakodashim*. The "screen" in the *Mishkan* that separates between the *Kodesh* and the courtyard comes last on the list.

Everything in life needs a little bit of separation from other parts of the world. Although no job of a particular person or group of people is necessarily greater than any others, a sense of seclusion is necessary to extracting the most out of each individual. The Torah demands that partitions be placed in between different areas of the *Mishkan* since each section is intrinsically holy. If two unique entities combine, each one will lose its own distinctiveness. However, when separated correctly, each one can reach its fullest potential.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky quotes the *pasuk* "And let them make Me a mikdash, that I may dwell among them (Shmot 25:8)," in his *sefer "Emet LeYaakov"*, explaining that the word *Mikdash*, means *devarim hamekudashim* - holy objects. Rashi writes such an explanation on the *pasuk*, "And the Kohathites the bearers of the Mikdash (Bamidbar 10:21)" as Rashi explains the word *Mikdash* as being holy objects.

III. The *Midrash Rabba* discusses that the *Aron*, *Shulchan*, and *Mizbeach* each represent something unique. The *Shulchan* is considered to be the "crown of kings" since, explains the *Eitz Yosef*, a commentary on the *Midrash Rabba*, tables represent wealth and prosperity. The *Mizbeach* represents the "crown of the Kohanim" since they are the privileged people that bring the *korbanot* on behalf of *Bnei Yisrael*. Lastly, the *Aron* represents the "crown of Torah" since it itself contains the *Luchot*. However, the *Aron* is considered to be the greatest in group.

This superiority of the *Aron* is hinted to in the *pasukim*, as the Torah writes by the *Shulchan* and the *Mizbeach* that, "And thou shalt make unto it" as opposed to the lashon of "and shalt make upon it" written by the *Aron*. The *Midrash* notes that the different lashon in describing the *Aron* implies that the "crown of Torah" is greater than the other two crowns. Furthermore, the *Midrash* states that one who was *zocheh* to the *Keter shel Torah* is as if he was *zocheh* to the other two *Ketarim*.

We can now understand an interesting law concerning the *Aron*. The *pasuk* says that the poles in the rings attached to the *Aron* should never be removed. Why are the poles of the *Aron* any different from the poles of the *Shulchan*? Rav Kamenetsky explains that this is exactly what the *Gemara* in *Pesachim* means when it says that one who donates money to a *Talmid Chacham* is *zocheh* to be part of the

Yeshivah shel Maalah. The *Aron*, which represents the crown of Torah, is like the *Talmidei Chachamim* that study Torah. The poles in the *Aron* are the people who strengthen Torah learning by supporting its students. Those who are *Mechazek* the Torah are considered as if they study it. Therefore, explains Rav Kamenetsky, the poles can never leave the *Aron*, even though the *Aron* does not need them, since they are so integrally linked.

Rabbi Yissachar Dov Rubin quotes Rabbi Nassan Adler who explains this same concept can be seen from the other side of the coin. One might think that in a Yissachar-Zevulun relationship, “Zevulun,” the business active participant, is acquiring all the money to support both him and “Yissachar.” In addition, one might think that only Zevulun is the real supporter in the relationship. In reality, this is not true; sometimes the *talmid chacham* has an unseen role in the partnership. We see that *Chazal* said that G-d proclaimed that the world exists in the *zechus* of Rabbi Chanina Ben Dosa while he was alive.

Shlomo Hamelech in *sefer Mishlei* writes that “*For the commandment is a lamp, and the Torah is light.*” Whenever a certain concept or bafflement in the Torah seems to be unsolvable, *Shlomo Hamelech* tells us that there is always light to solve the mystery. No concept or *pasukim* in the Torah are meant to be left in the dark, disregarded as a useless piece of information for our times. The light of the Torah is not extinguishable. Furthermore, light does not just remain secluded in one place, it spreads out to all different kinds of realms. So too, one should not consider Torah as having answers to religious questions only. On the contrary, as *Ben Bag Bag* says “*Hafoch Bah Hafoch Bah, DeCholah Bah*”-“Delve in it and delve in it, for everything is in it.” (*Pirkei Avot* 5:26)

Thanks to hamelaket@gmail.com for collecting the following items:

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
<info@jewishdestiny.com>
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Jerusalem Post :: Friday, February 24, 2012
GENERATIONAL RECOGNITION :: Rabbi Berel Wein

With the help of the Lord I have reached an age where my older great grandchildren recognize me as a person of interest in their young lives. They still find it hard to fathom how their grandfather or grandmother - such old people in their eyes - can have an even older father. But somehow they sense that I do fit in somewhere in their family and their lives.

As one of them put it as I stood beside my son: “Two zaydies.” I already have great grandchildren in schools, studying Torah and winning “masmid of the week” awards. So I feel that I am able to recognize them (though I admit that it is difficult at times to keep track of all of their names) even if they as yet don’t really recognize me and place me in the proper generational slot in our family.

I am from a generation that rarely had contact with living grandparents and where seeing and communicating with living great grandparents was one of the wonders of the world. I was one of the few amongst my friends that knew and had a loving relationship with a living grandparent – my maternal grandfather - until I was ten years of age.

The blessings of longevity that the Lord has bestowed upon our times through the advances in technology and medicine, has enabled great grand parenthood to become almost a norm in many sections of our society. My father lived to see a fifth generation but the Talmud teaches us that the emotional connection of family does not really extend beyond great grand parenthood.

In any event, when dealing with great grand parenthood the emotional flow is pretty much one way from the old down to the young. It is usually too early in life for the sense of the greater family to be appreciated by the young. It is only when we grow older – usually much older – that we begin to appreciate family relationships and generational bonds.

There is an intense desire among many Jews to determine their ancestry and to learn who their great grandparents were. I receive regularly requests sent through my Destiny Foundation by Jews from all over the world asking if I can somehow help them trace back their family lineage. This break in the generations has many causes to it – the Holocaust, assimilation, the Left and Communism, the loss of the feelings of Jewish identity, late marriages, if any at all, etc., are all contributing factors to this dissonance in Jewish family life.

Interestingly enough many of these requests always begin with the plaintive statement: “I think I am descended from a great rabbi...” Many times that is really true. In fact, I believe that all of us are probably descended from some great rabbi and it is this subconscious realization that gnaws at our soul and conscience and piques our curiosity regarding our past.

It is one thing to learn of the past from a book or even from photographs. It is a completely different experience to learn of the past from a living person, from one’s own great grandfather. So even though my great grandchildren are very young and not overly friendly to me as of yet I have set for myself the goal of talking to them about our family - where we come from and what we represent. Maybe decades later down the pike they will recall the words of their great grandfather and do the same for their offspring as well.

The Torah sets for us the requirement to tell our story into “the ears of your children and your children’s children.” Tragically, today there are so many Jews who do not know our story and are ignorant of our narrative as to our place in the world and in history. The contribution of our older generations in rectifying these glaring omissions is of immense value and necessary importance.

Hillel’s words, “If I am not for me then who will be for me?” are really the clarion call of the hour in our current situation. Children that know and appreciate the fact that they know and can communicate with grandparents and great grandparents have an advantage in their own personal lives. They are never again truly alone nor feel abandoned. A strong sense of past fuels an ambitious and industrious drive for a better future. That is and was how Jewish survival and success was always achieved and will continue to be achieved. I pray that my great grandchildren remember me for good. That probably is the greatest personal achievement that a dotting but aging rabbinical great grandparent can accomplish.
Shabat shalom.

From Destiny Foundation/Rabbi Berel Wein
<info@jewishdestiny.com>
Subject Weekly Parsha from Rabbi Berel Wein

Weekly Parsha :: TERUMAH :: Rabbi Berel Wein

The detailed description of the dimensions and materials of the *mishkan/tabernacle* as listed in this week’s parsha must contain great cosmic, if murky unknown importance. The question of the purpose of these myriad details being included in the Torah has been asked by all students of the Torah over the ages. While the answers advanced have also been many, few of them have been truly satisfactory. The matter remains a mystery.

It is an example of the continuing inscrutability of the Creator and the finite and limited ability of His creatures to divine His methods and

instructions. And perhaps this itself is the greatest and strongest message of the parsha. God does not need structures to be built to His service.

The words of the prophets of Israel make this point abundantly clear. Yet somehow the building and its exact method of construction and its size and dimensions are part of the service of Israel to its God.

The very mystery of it, the difficulty of human rational logic to encompass and understand the entire subject, is the object lesson of the parsha. Humankind has always attempted to create gods in its own image – to have a human god that we can somehow recognize and deal with. However the Torah states that the opposite is true - humans were created in the image of God, so to speak, and throughout life and the ages, the quest to reach and understand that image has been the focal point of human history and existence. God will soon tell Moshe that no human being can “see” Him and remain alive. The mystery of the mishkan/tabernacle is part of that quest to “see” Him and understand our relationship to the Creator.

The mishkan/tabernacle also illustrates the partnership, so to speak, between God, Israel and humankind generally. The mishkan/tabernacle required human effort and resources. People had to, of their own volition, give material of great value and labor of great talent to the project. This fact alone signifies the relationship between God and Israel.

If there is a movement of goodness and spirituality on the part of us here in the lower world there will be a commensurate response in the Heavenly world above as well. The famous parable is the phrase in Psalms, that the Lord is the shadow of our right hand. When a human being moves his hand, the shadow it makes moves with it. So too do our actions and behaviors here on earth call forth a movement and response from Heaven. Thus the words of the rabbis that the Temple built below is parallel to the Temple built above in Heaven.

Therefore the dimensions and instructions given to us for building our earthly Temple are meant to allow it to match, in exactly, the Heavenly Temple that it is to mimic. This is part of the goal of humans to imitate, so to speak, their Creator in attitude, values and behavior. The mishkan/tabernacle stands as the symbol of this symbiotic relationship between Heaven and humans that is in itself the basic axiom of Judaism and Jewish life.

Shabat shalom.

From Ohr Somayach <ohr@ohr.edu>

To weekly@ohr.edu

Subject Torah Weekly

**Ohr Somayach :: Torah Weekly :: Parshat Teruma
by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair - www.seasonsofthemoon.com
For the week ending 25 February 2012 / 1 Adar I 5772**

Insights

Guiding The Lily

“Its knobs and its blossoms will be (hammered) from it...” (25:31)

In English, when we speak of “gilding the lily”, we mean that something has been unnecessarily adorned. How can the lily be made more beautiful? If you paint it gold will it be more radiant? When you paint a lily it detracts from its true beauty. It’s “overdone”.

There’s a common misconception that the Torah is like a lily and the Rabbis were a bunch of lily painters.

There is not a single Rabbinical dictum or law, not an extrapolation nor an embellishment that is not hinted to in the Torah itself. Everything stems ultimately from the Torah.

We can see this idea in this week’s Torah portion: “You shall make a Menorah of pure gold, hammered out shall the Menorah be made, its base, its shaft, its cups, its knobs and its blossoms will be (hammered) from it.”

The Menorah was extruded from one solid block of gold. Nothing was grafted on to it. Just as its base and its shaft and its cups were integral, drawn from the same block of gold, so too were its knobs and its blossoms integral and drawn from the same block of gold.

The same is true with every law that the Rabbis promulgated. Nothing is grafted on. Nothing is unrelated embellishment. Just as the Torah laws — the “shaft” and the “cups” of the Torah — stem from an indivisible unity, so does every last Rabbinical dictum and decree. It’s “knobs” and its “blossoms” derive from that same ‘block of gold’.

The lily is ungolded.

Source: Chafetz Chaim

A Package Deal

“The Keruvim shall be with wings spread upward, sheltering the Cover with their wings with their faces toward each other...” (25:16)
Rabbi, who is better?

A) Someone who is scrupulous in observance of Jewish ritual, has Grade-A tefillin, is super-careful about what he puts in his mouth, but when it comes to what comes out of his mouth he’s not so vigilant. He can be hurtful and angry, and sometimes he speaks malicious gossip.
Or:

B) Someone who drives to golf on Shabbat but just endowed an entire wing in the hospital and is universally loved by everyone he meets?
Many people think that you can be a good person without keeping the mitzvot. But what does it mean to be a “good person”. Judaism defines being a good person as someone who does what G-d wants. And what does G-d want? He told us in the Torah. G-d wants us to be good to each other, to care for the sick and the orphaned, to love converts and to protect widows. The human values that society cherishes are long-time Torah gifts to mankind-at-large.

However, for a Jewish person, G-d also wants us to keep Shabbat and to refrain from eating cheeseburgers. These are His desires no less than clothing the needy and visiting the sick. Torah observance is only complete when we commit to both a correct relationship with our Creator as well as our fellow man.

One without the other is only half the picture.

Look above the Holy Ark in any synagogue and you’ll notice a representation of the two tablets on which the Torah was engraved. Why weren’t the Ten Commandments written on one tablet of stone? Why did G-d hew two pieces of rock for His contract with the Jewish People?

Obviously you can’t say that G-d couldn’t find a piece of stone big enough for all ten. A little bit of quarrying is infinitely less than a blink of the eye for He Who carved the Milky Way out of nothingness.

And you also can’t say that He made two just in case one got lost – a sort of Cosmic Data Backup – because what was written on the first tablet was different from what was written on the second.

In fact, if you examine what is written on the first tablet, you’ll notice that the commandments that they contain pertain to the relationship between G-d and man: “I am G-d... You shall not recognize other gods in My presence... Don’t make a carved image... Don’t take the Name of the L-rd your G-d in vain... Remember the day of Shabbat to sanctify it...”

The second tablet speaks of commandments between man and his fellow: Don’t murder... Don’t commit adultery... Don’t covet...

“The Keruvim shall be ... with their faces toward each other...”

The Keruvim on the cover of the Ark that contained Ten Commandments symbolize the Torah itself. The fact that they faced each other teaches us that it’s impossible to observe the Torah unless our relationship with our fellow man mirrors our relationship with G-d, and vice versa. One without the other is only half the picture.

For the Torah is a package deal.

Source: Based on the Malbim

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Subject Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum Parshas Terumah

And let them take for Me a portion from every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion. (25:2)

The Bais Yisrael of Gur offers a homiletic rendering of this pasuk that has practical application, especially for those who devote themselves to Jewish outreach. An issue arises: if one spends most of his time teaching aleph bais, the alphabet, so to speak, to those who are returning to Judaism, he might stunt his own personal growth. In addition, such people spend much of their time in environments that are, at best, quite distant from the milieu of a Torah way of life. Thus, this phenomenon has negatively impacted the ranks of those who might otherwise have chosen to devote themselves to this form of harbotzes Torah, Torah dissemination.

The Gerrer Rebbe interprets the pasuk in the following manner: V'yikchu Li terumah, "If it is your desire to elevate yourself, to ascend the ladder of spiritual ascendancy," mei'eis kol ish, "from every man"; by infusing all Jews with Torah and yiraas Shomayim, fear of Heaven, by bringing all Jews closer to Hashem and the Torah way of life, "tikchu es terumasi, "you will thus elevate yourself and thereby bring yourself closer to Hashem." The Rebbe says that this path is baduk u'menusah, "tried and proven," to succeed. One who devotes himself sincerely to the fields of kiruv and chinuch, outreach and education, will ultimately enhance his own spiritual development.

If I may supplement this idea with the following: One who teaches - learns. The preparation involved, coupled with the communication skills one develops, enhances one's own understanding of the material by granting him deeper insight. When one has the responsibility of explaining a Torah concept to an individual who has little or no knowledge, he had better be prepared. If one takes his work seriously, he himself will benefit immeasurably.

Furthermore, one cannot possibly infuse another Jew with a passion for Yiddishkeit, unless he himself has it. Kiruv and chinuch work is quite similar to lighting one candle from another. If the first one is not properly lit, the second one cannot obtain its flame. The unaffiliated are infused with the passion they observe and sense that we have. The flip-side is, of course: if we are deficient, we can be a detriment to the development of others.

Last, if we seek to be a terumah, to elevate ourselves, we must reach out to kol ish, all Jews - regardless of background, moral, ethical, social grounding and credentials. Not all individuals are geshmak, "pleasant," to work with. Some have "pathologies," histories that are far from agreeable or sympathetic. In fact, some have downright unseemly backgrounds. There are those who were born Jewish, but that is as far as their heritage extends; they neither have a clue as to the meaning of Judaism, nor do they have a desire to find out. He might present an unsavory fa?ade, but, beneath it all, his chest contains a warm, sensitive heart, just waiting to be spiritually resuscitated. It is a tall order, but, at the end of the day, it brings us the greatest satisfaction - both emotionally and spiritually.

And let them take for Me a portion. (25:2)

The Mishkan was the embodiment of kedushah, holiness, on this world. It teaches us that the mundane can - and should - be elevated. This is the concept of Judaism - elevating the mundane, sanctifying the physical. Whatever Hashem created can be used for a sublime purpose. When we take that attitude to simply physical matters, surely we can apply it to people. Regardless of one's background or religious affiliation, he can become holy. The spark within him is a living potential. It only has to be stoked, and the flame will rise.

When the Torah commands us to perform a mitzvah, it first relates the concept of the mitzvah before getting to the "how to" aspect of it. It is, therefore, surprising that concerning the construction of the Mishkan, the Torah immediately presents the "how to" aspect. "Take for Me"; first comes the fundraising, and later the purpose of the funds is elaborated. Should it not have been the other way around? I want you to construct a Mishkan for Me, where My Presence will repose; then, we get into the fund-raising component Construction needs financing. In order to perform this mitzvah, the people have to open their wallets and part with some money.

Applying the earlier idea concerning the underlying concept of the Mishkan, Horav Mordechai Gifter, zl, explains what appears to be the reversed roles in the mitzvah of building Hashem's Mishkan. The Rosh Yeshivah explains that financing the construction of the Mishkan was not merely a preliminary stage in the process of building the Mishkan. Instead, it was actually the first step in the building process. Giving of one's possessions to make the Mishkan meant elevating mundane matter and sanctifying it. This is the concept of the Mishkan. The Torah, therefore, instructs us to take terumah before the actual command to construct the Mishkan is conveyed, because doing so embodies the very essence of the Mishkan.

I think we can extend this idea further. What is the difference between donors? Why is it that, for some, parting with their possessions for charity is a breeze while, for others, it is a traumatic experience. When one views tzedakah giving as elevating his material possessions, granting them consecrated status, contributing becomes an uplifting experience. For those who view it as a "pulling teeth" experience, it becomes somewhat of an ordeal - both for the donor and for the beneficiary.

The staves shall remain in the rings of the Ark; they may not be removed from it. (25:15)

The staves/poles were to be left in the rings permanently. One who removed them was in violation of both a positive and prohibitive commandment. This restriction was not applied to carrying the poles of the Mizbayach, Altar, and Shulchan, Table. Another unique aspect of the Badei Ha'Aron, poles of the Ark, was that they protruded into the Paroches, Curtain, which separated the Kodesh Hakadashim, Holy of Holies, from the Kodesh, Sanctuary. In other words, they were visible in the Mishkan and later in the Bais Hamikdash, but only through the Curtain - never directly. This is, indeed, the manner in which they were always seen: through their protrusion in the Curtain. Even when the Mishkan was dismantled and the Aron wrapped in the Paroches, Aharon HaKohen and his sons would pull on the poles until they formed protrusions in the Curtain. In other words, the poles never left their place and were always visible as a protrusion against the Curtain. What is the significance of all th

is? If they are supposed to be noticed, why are they covered? If they are not to be seen, why are they placed in a manner which compels protrusion?

Horav Meir Bergman, Shlita, cites the Meshech Chochmah in his commentary to Parashas Bechukosai. Rav Meir Simchah quotes a passage from the Talmud Bava Metzia 85b, in which Rabbi Chaviva bar Surmaki said, "I saw that in the morning the eyes of a certain sage who was regularly visited by Eliyahu HaNavi were bright and beautiful, but, in the evening they appeared as if scorched by fire. Rav Chaviva asked the sage, "What happened?"

The sage replied, "I asked Eliyahu HaNavi to show me the sages in Heaven as they rise up from Gan Eden to the Yeshivah Shel Maalah, Heavenly Academy. He told me, 'You will be able to look at all of their thrones except for the throne of Rabbi Chiya, at which you must not look.'"

"I asked him, 'How can I distinguish between the thrones?' he replied, 'All of them are accompanied by Angels as they rise up and descend again. Rabbi Chiya's throne rises and descends of its own accord.' I was

unable to restrain myself. I had to see the throne of Rabbi Chiya." The sage gazed on the throne, and immediately two sparks of fire came and struck his eyes, blinding him. "The next day, I went to Rabbi Chiya's grave and entreated that he intercede on my behalf, and I was healed." The Meshech Chochmah wonders why Rabbi Chiya's throne was deemed "off limits"? What distinguished his throne? He explains that the difference is like the difference between a talmid chacham, Torah scholar, and a machzik Torah, one who gives material support to enable Torah study. In the Talmud Berachos 34b, Chazal state that all the visions of the Neviim, Prophets, concerning the future were regarding the reward awaiting one who marries his daughter off to a talmid chacham, who does business on his behalf or who grants him something of his possessions. Concerning the talmidei chachamim themselves, the pasuk in Yeshayahu 64:3, applies, "No eye has seen G-d, but Yours what will be done for he who awaits You."

This means that one whose main occupation is in the field of material involvement, things of the mundane, physical and familiar to mortal man - then his reward, splendid as it may be, will nonetheless be drawn from the palette of ordinary human life - something about which he can prophesy, something in line with his physical vision. A person who occupies himself primarily with holy wisdom, the shleimus, perfection, of whose concepts lies beyond the realm of the human experience, then his reward will also be beyond that of human account. The profundities of the Torah's wisdom will be revealed to him, which will delight him in a totally spiritual manner, far beyond the grasp of the human experience. Thus, the Prophets could not speak of it.

Maharal explains that a prophecy is a vision. As such, the Navi with his physical senses can perceive only those things that are part of the physical world; his ability to "see" is limited to the human experience. Those things that are foreign to earthly human life cannot be perceived via the prophetic vision.

The sage could look at the "thrones of the sages" as a reference to the individuals who support talmidei chachamim, as a throne supports the person who sits upon it. He could, however, not gaze upon the sages themselves as they ascended to the Heavenly Yeshivah to study the Torah's hidden wisdom. The reward which they received was supernatural, something which no human eye has been able to behold. Why was Rabbi Chiya's throne singled out from the others? Apparently, those who were machazik, supported, Rabbi Chiya's Torah were in a league all their own. Their reward was greater than the reward received by the other Torah supporters. Rav Bergman explains that Rabbi Chiya's Torah was different than that of the other sages, because not only was he personally an erudite scholar, but he also traveled around Eretz Yisrael, seeing to it that the children of parents who themselves were illiterate - who could not teach their own children Torah - were taught the Chamishah Chumshei Torah, Five Chumashim, and the Shishah Sidrei Mishnah, Six Orders of the Mishnah. The individual who had the privilege of supporting Rabbi Chiya was supporting both Rabbi Chiya and the future thousands of children whose lives would be changed and given meaning through the efforts of Rabbi Chiya.

This Torah insight is not a primer for fund-raisers, but it very well could be, since it underscores the incredible merit of those who support yeshivos and all forms of Torah education. No praise is too great, no reward too high, for those who enable a tzaddik to build future generations. This was Rabbi Chiya. He was not satisfied with his own learning, unless he was able to provide options for others. The world as man knows it holds nothing so precious, nothing so fitting, to reward the "Rabbi Chiyas" of the world. They were given the Torah itself. They could go to the "highest shiur." No mortal could behold this "throne"; thus, the sage who looked was blinded.

With this idea in mind, Rav Bergman goes on to explain why the Badim were so significant, and why unique mitzvos and miracles encompass them. The commentators teach that the Ark and its poles symbolize the

Torah and its supporters. As the poles enable the Torah to be carried and upheld, likewise, the machazikei Torah, who support and sustain Torah scholars, afford them the opportunity to study Torah unimpeded by the mundane demands of the human experience. This is why the poles may never leave the Ark. The Aron is their designated place. If the world was left for even one moment without the sound of Torah study reverberating in the air, if Torah study were to come to a halt, the entire Creation would lapse into *tohu va'vohu*, nothingness. The Torah supporters have a full-time task that may not be interrupted. Theirs is a unique, critical responsibility. One who removes the poles from the Aron or causes a hindrance, a rift in the support of Torah, incurs punishment. Why were we not able to see the poles with the naked eye? Why did they protrude against the Curtain, but could not penetrate into visible airspace? Rav Bergman explains that on the Kapores, Cover of the Ark, Keruvim were fashioned. These images were shaped with the faces of children. The Ark represented both Torah studied by adults and Torah studied by children. Both were upheld by the poles, representing the supporters of Torah.

We will now understand why the poles had to protrude, but yet, not be visible. Whoever gives support to those who prepare the next generation of Torah Jews, who enables the continued Torah existence of Klal Yisrael, is achieving the same merit as the supporters of Rabbi Chiya. Regardless of the object focus of one's support: - yeshivos and kollelim, which will provide tomorrow's Torah educators; institutions that prepare one to go into the secular world and maintain his Torah identity; organizations that provide Torah content for lives that would otherwise have little to no meaning, all build the future of our People. Boys, girls, all Jewish children need a Torah education in a Torah environment. The reward of those who sustain our Torah institutes is beyond all imagination.

This is why the poles, although protruding, must be covered by the Curtain. They are seen to remind us that, without material support, the Torah will lapse - and with it, Klal Yisrael. The covering represents the unimaginable reward these supporters will merit as a result of their magnanimity.

You shall make the planks of the Mishkan of Acacia wood, standing erect. (26:15)

The designation of the shittim tree, which is a variety of cedar, for the Mishkan dates back to Yaakov Avinu, who had cedars planted in Egypt. Prior to his passing, he instructed his sons to take the wood along when they left Egypt. He foresaw that one day they would be used in the Mishkan. In another view found in the Midrash, these cedars were planted by Avraham Avinu when he was in Egypt. Our Patriarch sought to concretize the foundations of our future Sanctuary, which represented to him the anchor of Klal Yisrael's moral and religious survival through its many trials and tribulations. While he knew that the edifice would not last forever, he was certain that its spirit of sanctity would prevail over the test of time.

The Talmud Yoma 72a and Succah 45b focus on what appears to be an extra word in the pasuk, *atzei shittim omdim*, "Acacia wood, standing erect." What is meant by the word *omdim*, standing? Chazal offer a number of interpretations. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai posits that an important lesson is to be derived from this word. "Perhaps you will say, *ovad sivram u'bateil sikuyan*, 'Their promise is gone, and their hope is ruined, never to return.'" Now that the Mishkan and its later counterpart, the Bais Hamikdash, have fallen into disuse and their beams have been hidden, it is all over. What purpose is there to the beams without a Sanctuary? This is why the Torah writes *omdim, standing*: to inform us that they stand for all eternity. This is similar to Chazal's statement in the Talmud Pesachim 87b, concerning the letters of the Luchos. The Torah writes that Moshe Rabbeinu broke the Luchos "before your eyes" (Devarim 9:17). It was impossible for all of Klal Yisrael to have seen Moshe shatte

r the Luchos. Chazal say the tablets were broken, but the letters flew up to Heaven, a phenomenon witnessed by the entire nation. How are we to understand the concept of the atzei shittim standing for all eternity? Rabbeinu Bachya explains that the Mishkan and, afterwards, the Bais Hamikdash, were the physical counterparts corresponding to the various spiritual forces that exist in Creation. Each of the world's spiritual components found a parallel in some aspect of the Mishkan's construction. Thus, the Sanctuary expressed the unity that exists between the physical temporal realm with that of the spiritual/eternal realm. There is one problem with this correspondence. If the physical edifice is destroyed, does this mean that there is no longer a physical representative of the spiritual, which, thus, will spell an end to the spiritual dimension it represents? The Torah writes the word "standing" to allay this fear. It teaches us that the spiritual forces which are the life force of the physical, its source of illumination, will continue on - to eternity. Our hope and yearning, which had heretofore been directed toward the Sanctuary, can continue unabated. The light will stay undimmed. Although its physical counterpart may be lost for some time, it will not be abrogated, but will return to its former eminence. Alternatively, in his Takanos Ha'Shavim, Horav Tzadok HaKohen, zl, m'Lublin, elucidates Chazal's statement, suggesting it applies to baalei teshuvah, penitents, Jews who were raised in an assimilated environment, who have literally "returned" to their heritage. Rav Tzadok notes that the various components of the Sanctuary represent different groups of Jews. The Kerashim represent those Jews who have sinned. This is based on Midrash Tanchumah, Terumah 9. The Kerashim support the notion that even those who have sinned will ultimately repent and assume their rightful portion in Klal Yisrael's destiny. What happens, however, to this destiny once the Sanctuary is destroyed? Lest one think that the loss of the Sanctuary's beams reflects the disenfranchisement of these sinners from Klal Yisrael's future, "Their promise is gone, and their hope is ruined!" The pasuk assures us that these beams remain standing for all eternity. Those who have been estranged from Torah will eventually re turn!

In his Kol HaTorah, Horav Elie Munk, zl, applies the atzei shittim as a metaphor to tzaddikim, the righteous in this world. Chazal teach that there are twenty-four species of cedar, with shittim being one of the most precious. The righteous are often compared to cedars and particularly to the cedars of the Sanctuary. In Sefer Tehillim 92:13,4, David HaMelech declares: Tzaddik ka'tamar yifrach, "The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree"; k'erez ba'Levanon yisge', "Like the cedar in Lebanon will he grow"; Shesulim b'Bais Hashem. "Planted in the House of Hashem"; b'chatzros Elokeinu yafrichu, "They shall flourish in the courts of our G-d." Accordingly, even if the Bais Hamikdash will not physically survive, the righteous will nonetheless endure and flourish in each generation. Chazal teach in the Talmud Shabbos 33b, "If the Sanctuary falls, the righteous will continue to protect their generation." They are omdim, stand tall and erect for all time.

The eternal nature of Klal Yisrael is due to our never forsaking the Torah, which is nitzchi, eternal. Through exile and tribulation, from pogrom, to inquisition, to Holocaust, we have never renounced the Torah, and, as a result, it has never abandoned us. Many stories abound which underscore this idea. One, which is specifically meaningful, recently came to my attention. In his Living the Parashah, Rabbi Shimon Finkelman relates a poignant story which captures it all.

The city of Gateshead, England, can best be described as quaint. Small in size, it is primarily an industrial town. Its physical appearance leaves little about which to boast. Its spiritual dimension is an entirely different story. Gateshead is home to an excellent yeshivah, world-renowned kollel, Bais Yaakov and seminary. The yeshivah has produced a number of famous Torah leaders. Indeed, the Mashgiach of Beth Medrah Govohah, Horav Matisyahu Solomon, Shlita, himself studied in

Gateshead Yeshivah and later became its Mashgiach. He described the austere conditions under which he and his friends grew in Torah. The yeshivah building was actually a converted house, with two adjoining rooms serving as the bais ha'medrash. Space was at a premium, with students sitting shoulder to shoulder around a long table. It was so crowded that their Gemorahs overlapped. Yet, these conditions did not diminish anyone's ability to succeed in Torah learning. On the contrary, it was due to the mere fact that the students were devoted to learning - even under such conditions - that they excelled to such a high degree. One day, an American journalist touring England visited the town of Wallsend, a tourist attraction not far from Gateshead. This man was born to Jewish parents, but Torah observance was quite foreign to him. He was aware of some of the more well-known Jewish traditions, but this was the extent of his Jewish orientation and affiliation. Wallsend's tourist attraction was an ancient pile of rubble covered by green moss. Apparently, this pile was all that remained of a wall built by the Roman Emperor Hadrian when he conquered England and built a wall to keep the Scottish army from entering his newly-acquired territory. This pile of rubble was the "tribute" to Hadrian's triumph. Hence, the name Wallsend.

The journalist was occupied with photographing the stones and recording their history, as if it were something of great import. Suddenly, he remembered that that day was the anniversary of his father's passing. Yahrzeit means a lot to a Jew. For some estranged Jews, it is all they have, all that bonds them with Yiddishkeit. Though he was not observant, the journalist annually made a special effort to recite Kaddish for his father's soul.

He asked around for the location of a synagogue that might have a minyan during the week. He was told that in the town of Gateshead, some ten miles away, was a yeshivah which had a minyan thrice daily. He drove over to the Gateshead Yeshivah and entered the little house that served as their campus. The scene which he beheld blew his mind. He was awed by the sight before his eyes. Before him, in the cramped quarters which served as their bais ha'medrash, were young men studying Torah. They were arguing passionately, as each one examined the Talmud closely and expounded upon his interpretation. As the journalist stood there in awe, he heard one student shout at his study partner, "But Rabbi Akiva disagrees!"

When the journalist heard the name of the fabled Tanna, the illustrious Rabbi Akiva, he was taken aback. Somewhat versed in Jewish history, he recognized the name of the Tanna, as one of the most distinguished disseminators of the Oral Law. As a result of defying the decree of the Roman Emperor Hadrian not to teach Torah, Rabbi Akiva had been brutally tortured and murdered. It was the same Hadrian who had built what became a pile of rubble.

When the journalist returned to America, he wrote a revealing article about his travels. In it, he observed that nothing was left of the mighty Hadrian, conqueror, ruler, leader of great armies, nothing but a pile of stone and rubble, covered with moss. On the other hand, the teachings of Rabbi Akiva, the man who defied Hadrian and who was the victim of his brutality, the individual who was a thorn in the emperor's side, whom the wicked ruler sought to obliterate, are still being reviewed over and over, almost 2,000 years after his death.

This is the meaning of atzei shittim omdim. The Jewish People and their Torah stand forever.

Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh, Hashem Tzvako. Holy, Holy, Holy - Hashem of Hosts.

As mentioned, the three-fold repetition of Kadosh can be interpreted either in ascending degrees of holiness, or in descending degrees. Horav S. R. Hirsch, zl, interprets this Kedushah repetition very much like the Kedushah d'Sidra, which is quoted in the U'Va l'Tzion prayer recited toward the end of the weekday Shacharis. There, the Navi visualizes the Kedushah descending from the highest level to the lowest level. Thus, it

is referred to as Kedushah d'Sidra, because it descends in the ordinary world order of things. First, is the holiness of the highest level: Kaddish b'Shmei Meroma, the holiness in the place of His Presence. Then, it descends closer to our world with Kaddish al ara, holiness on this earth fashioned by Him. Last, is Kaddish l'olam u'lolmei olmaya, reference to the future when all the world will be filled with His splendor. Our world is filled with Hashem's splendor. The splendor of His Glory, the Ziv Yikarei, moves people to express themselves emotionally -

either to tears or singing, when they perceive the awesome beauty of nature in its various phases or geographical settings. Indeed, the beauty of nature is a reflection of His Shechinah. We have but to look with a penetrating and appreciative eye.

In memory of Our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents R' Naftali Michael ben Nesanel z"l Maras Sara Riva bas R' Yaakov Meir Hacohen a"v The Rothner Family

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Subject Rabbi Frand on Parsha

Rabbi Yissocher Frand - Parshas Teruma

Materials Listed In Descending Order Until They Mention The Expensive Stones

When speaking about collecting the various materials used in building the Mishkan [Tabernacle], the Torah enumerates various materials in descending order of value (Gold, silver, copper...). However, at the end of the list, after having enumerated relatively inexpensive items (wood, oil, spices), the Torah lists the Shoham stones and the precious stones used in Ephod of the High Priest's breastplate (the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim).

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh asks the obvious question -- Why are the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim out of order in this catalog of solicited items which is apparently arranged in descending order of value? The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh suggests three reasons for this. We will briefly discuss the first reason, and then we will discuss the third reason more elaborately.

< br>In Parshas Vayakhel, the Princes (of each Tribe) were the ones who brought the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim donations. However, the word used there for Princes (Nesim) is spelled defectively -- without a yud. Our Sages explain that the Almighty was upset with them for delaying their donation until the end of the campaign. Although their motives were ostensibly good (they wanted to wait until the end to see where the shortfall was and they planned to make up the difference), Chazal tell us that this was not the correct attitude. They should have enthusiastically been among the first to give donations. Because of their lack of haste in making their donations, a letter was removed from their title.

So in his first explanation, the Ohr HaChaim explains why the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim were listed last here in Terumah -- because in fact they were the last things to be donated. This is to remind us of the foible on the part of the Princes in making that donation.< br>

In the past, we have attempted to understand what exactly was wrong with what the Princes offered. In our experience, anyone who would make such a proposal to a fundraiser (you do the best you can and then come back to me -- I will cover the deficit) would be a hero.

I recently heard a new approach which helps explain the sentiment of Chazal from my good friend Dr. Marcel Reishcer. By assuming there would indeed be a deficit, the Princes were underestimating the generosity and the dedication of the Nation of Israel. They should have expected that everyone would give generously and that if they waited too

long, they would have no contribution to make to enable them to have a share in the Mishkan. Who gave them the right to make such an assumption about the holy nation of Israel? They were in fact wrong. Everything WAS given to the extent that their contribution did not go for any part of the Mishkan -- only for the stones of the garments of the High Priest.

< br>Be that as it may, according to the first answer of the Ohr HaChaim, the reason Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim were listed last in the sequence of materials was because they were the last things to be brought.

In his third interpretation, the Ohr HaChaim HaKodesh quotes a Gemara [Yoma 75a] that the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim were brought to the Princes on clouds from Gan Eden. Since these were donations that in effect "came from Heaven" and did not represent and blood, sweat, or tears -- there was no toil involved -- they were listed after the oils and spices, which, although they may have cost only pennies, did represent a gift that came from people's labor and efforts and in that way were superior to the much more "expensive" gifts of precious stones.

That which counts in the eyes of the Almighty is not the value of the gift received but what the gift represented for the person who brought the gift. A poor person's check of \$18, which may be something he had to scrape for, can very well mean more in the Eyes of Heaven than a six figure gift which is "pocket change" for the person who wrote the check. This is the lesson (according to the 3rd approach) of the Avnei Shoham and Avnei Miluim's sequence at the tail end of the list of materials donated.

Apropos to this, I would like to very briefly read an article that was published in a newspaper in Vilna called "Dem Vort". This is a reporter's description of the dedication of the new building of the Yeshiva in Kletzk. [Rav Aharon Kotler, before he founded the Lakewood Yeshiva in Lakewood, New Jersey, was the Rosh Yeshiva of the Yeshiva in Kletzk.] The dedication was a major event. Rav Isser Zalman Meltzer came from Eretz Yisroel, Rav Elchanon Wasserman was also in attendance for this "Chanukas HaBayis" of the Kletzker Yeshiva, as was Rav Shimon Shkop, and all the leading Torah personalities of the pre-World War II Eastern Europe.

The reporter describes the massive parade through the town from the house of the Rosh Yeshiva to the new Yeshiva building. They entered the building and the Gabbaim (financial officers of the Yeshiva) went to the Bimah. People came up to the Bimah and gave their small donations to the Gabbaim. In the presence of all the Roshei Yeshiva, the Gabbaim made a blessing (Mi SheBerach) for each of the contributors. The reporter further writes (which may be startling to us) that the women too marched into the Beis Medrash. They took their ruble coins out of their purses and gave them to the Gabbaim so that they too could have a portion in the new Beis Medrash in Kletzk.

The reporter describes how a short old woman slowly and with difficulty made her way through the Beis Medrash towards the bimah. With a trembling hand she stretched out her very modest donation to give it to the Gabbai. Tears were rolling down her shriveled cheeks. "She was not just giving her few pennies; she was giving her very Jewish soul towards the building costs of that Yeshiva building." The reporter writes how inspired he was to see the joy and emotion that radiated from her face at having the privilege to participate in this historic event.

This is what the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh means in the answer cited above. A donation of goat hairs given with self-sacrifice may be deserving of being listed ahead of the most magnificent gift of precious stones, which come about without any toil or labor on the part of the donors.

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By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

Raiding the Pushka and Related Questions By Rabbi Yirmiyohu Kaganoff

In honor of Parshas Terumah, I present:

Question #1: TREMENDOUSLY APPEALING!

Yehudah presents the following dilemma: "I often feel pressured to pledge to the tzedakah appeals in shul; however, I am afraid that I will forget to pay afterwards. Is there a simple way to avoid creating a problem?"

Question #2: BORROWERS ANONYMOUS

Susan asks: "I often borrow small change from the pushkas that I keep on my window sill, but I am meticulous to return what I borrowed. Am I indeed permitted to borrow from the pushka?"

Question #3: DIVERTING ACTIVITIES

Tamar calls: I have a pushka in the house from an organization with which I have no contact. Instead, I would like to donate the money to my son's yeshiva, to demonstrate my hakaras hatov. May I give the money from the pushka to the yeshiva?

Answer:

In order to answer these questions, I first need to explain how a few general concepts affect the laws of tzedakah:

1. NEDER – A VOW

The Torah requires us to fulfill our vows (Bamidbar 30:3), and the consequences of neglecting this obligation are very serious (see Kesubos 72a). To avoid violating this prohibition, it is better to simply do the mitzvah involved without making a vow to commit oneself to its fulfillment (Nedarim 9a). For this reason, concerned people say "bli neder", whenever stating something that may imply a commitment to perform a good deed. The words bli neder prevent the commitment from becoming a vow, although one is still obligated to fulfill one's promise; simply, it does not have the stringency of a "vow" (Shu"t Shevet HaLevi 10:156:1; see also Shla'h, Torah SheBe'kesav, Parshas Matos, Derech Chayim). (In this article, I am not going to distinguish between the technical differences that exist between a neder, a vow, and a shavua, an oath; but I will refer, always, to neder.)

TZEDAKAH PLEDGES

Pledging money to tzedakah is a vow that one must fulfill. To quote the Torah:

Motza sifasecha tishmor ve'asisa ka'asher nadarta LaHashem Elokecha nedava asher dibarta bificha. Guard the utterances of your tongue and fulfill that which you vowed to Hashem, your G-d – the vow which you spoke with your mouth. (Devarim 23:24).

The Gemara rules explicitly that tzedakah is included in the requirements of this verse (Rosh HaShanah 6a). Therefore, one is required min haTorah to redeem a pledge that one made to tzedakah. Because of this law, it is strongly advisable to make charitable commitments bli neder, so that the pledge does not assume the severity of a vow (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 203:4 and 257:4).

2. BAL TE'ACHEIR -- Do not delay paying

This mitzvah prohibits delaying the redemption of a pledge, such as a commitment to offer a korban in the Beis HaMikdash. Expressing a

charitable pledge requires one to fulfill it as soon as possible; failure to do so violates the prohibition of bal te'acheir (Devarim 23:22; Rosh HaShanah 6a). The Gemara notes that the requirements of bal te'acheir for a tzedakah pledge are even more exacting than they are concerning other mitzvos, such as korbanos. One who (at the time of the Beis HaMikdash) pledges a korban may wait until the Festivals (Pesach, Shavuos, and Sukkos) to offer them, since he will then be traveling to Yerushalayim anyway. (Technically, he is required to offer the korban the first Yom Tov in order to fulfill his vow, but he does not violate the lo saaseh of bal te'acheir until all three Yomim Tovim have passed.) However, since a pledge to tzedakah can easily be fulfilled as soon as one locates a poor person, one must disburse the funds at the first possible opportunity.

Thus, the mitzvah of bal te'acheir provides another reason why one's pledges to tzedakah should be made bli neder. If someone pledged tzedakah without specifying bli neder, he/she is obligated to redeem the pledge immediately. However, if one specified that the obligation is bli neder, failing to redeem it immediately does not violate bal te'acheir. We can now address Yehudah's concern about responding to tzedakah appeals. His question was that he felt pressured to pledge donations and was concerned that he might forget to pay them. Ideally, he should donate without pledging, or alternatively, he can say that he is pledging with the understanding that he is not making any commitment whatsoever. (Essentially, this is disallowing his pledge.) A less preferable choice is to pledge bli neder, which assures that, should he forget to redeem his pledge, he will not have violated either the prohibition of vows or of bal te'acheir.

BORROWING FROM TZEDAKAH FUNDS

At this point, we will address Susan's concerns about borrowing from the pushka. Her first question was: May one borrow tzedakah funds for one's personal use? The following passage of Gemara discusses this issue:

Rabbah bar Avahu stated, "Someone who declares, 'This sela coin shall go to tzedakah,' may use it for his own purposes, and then later pay tzedakah a different coin" (Arachin 6a, as explained by Rashi). Rabbah bar Avahu is teaching that, although pledging a coin to tzedakah creates a charitable vow that one must redeem, one may still use that coin and then replace it. This is true because the tzedakah coin or currency itself does not become invested with sanctity, as a result of the pledge, which would prohibit its use (Rambam, Hilchos Matanos Aniyim 8:5). In essence, declaring "this coin shall go to tzedakah" is equivalent to saying, "I hereby commit myself to donate to tzedakah an amount of money equal to the value of this coin." The coin remains the donor's, and he may borrow it and later replace it (see Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 259:1).

The Gemara subsequently teaches that one may borrow the pledged coin only if it was not yet given to the gabbai, the tzedakah treasurer. Once the gabbai receives the money, it is tzedakah property, and one may not borrow it. Under normal circumstances, a treasurer is not authorized to lend or exchange tzedakah funds (Bava Basra 8a; Rambam, Hilchos Matanos Aniyim 8:4). One exception is when the lending or exchanging benefits the recipient of the funds (Arachin 6b; see Pischei Teshuvah, Yoreh Deah 259:4 for another exception).

LIMITED LIABILITY

By the way, the sanction to borrow pledged money is also a liability, since it sometimes makes the person responsible to replace the money if it is stolen (see Choshen Mishpat 301:6). On the other hand, in a case when one may not use tzedakah money, he is not liable in the event of its loss unless he was negligent, for example, forgetting where he put it.

WHO OWNS THE MONEY IN THE PUSHKA?

May Susan borrow from the pushka? According to what we have just learned, this depends on whether the money in the pushka already belongs to the organization or is still Susan's property. Many authorities debated this question extensively about 150 years ago. The shaylah that spawned this literature is interesting.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For the last few hundred years, many Jewish Diaspora households owned a pushka dedicated to Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes, a fund whose purpose was to provide succor for indigent Jews living in Eretz Yisrael. In a responsum dated Marcheshvan 18, 5626 (1865), Rav Mordechai Eitinga, then rav of Lvov (currently located in western Ukraine), was asked about someone who had accumulated a large sum of money in his Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes pushka and now felt that the local poor had a much greater need for these funds. Could he divert the money to local needs instead of sending it to Eretz Yisrael? Rav Eitinga discusses two issues:

(1) May money pledged to one charitable cause be diverted to a different one?

(2) Do the poor of Eretz Yisrael already own the money in the pushka?

If the answer to the first question is "yes," and to the second question is "no," then the money may be diverted to the local indigent. Otherwise, it must be sent to Eretz Yisrael, because each of the terms of the pledge must be absolutely fulfilled, or one is "stealing" money that already belongs to the poor of Eretz Yisrael (Shu"t Maamar Mordechai #15). Let us follow his analysis.

DIVERTING OR A DIVERSION

Whether one may divert tzedakah money from one individual or organization to another is, indeed, a dispute among early poskim. Why should one be permitted to divert the funds? Explaining this requires that we note a new factor that the Gemara did not discuss. In Rabbah bar Avahu's case, the donor simply declared, "This coin goes to tzedakah," without specifying a specific individual or organization. However, what happens if someone holding a wad of hundred dollar bills declares, "I dedicate this money to the Asher Richman Hebrew Academy"? Must he contribute this amount of money to the Richman Academy, or may he afterwards decide to send it to the Pauper Yeshiva? Does halachah require him to honor a pledge to a specific organization or individual, or is he simply required to donate this amount of money to any tzedakah? If indeed the pledge is simply a generic requirement to donate this amount to tzedakah, then it should follow that one may actually contribute the funds to a different charity from what he had originally intended.

13TH CENTURY CHUTZPAH

Early authorities discuss this question. A major posek of 13th century Germany, the Mordechai, reports a very unusual din Torah. A pauper claimed that a wealthy individual had promised him a specific amount of money and had not paid it, whereas the rich man denied having ever pledged any money. The poor man contended that the pledge obligated the donor to pay him, and that the case was therefore no different from that of any plaintiff claiming money from a defendant who denies that he owes any. The halachah in such instances is that the defendant is required to swear an oath (shevuas heses) denying the claim. Similarly, the Mordechai (Bava Kamma #172) ruled that the affluent man was required to swear that he had never pledged any money to the pauper! (He does not report whether or not this pauper was subsequently offered a position as Public Relations Director for any major Torah institution.) The poskim prove from this Mordechai that when one pledges money to an individual tzedakah, the particular tzedakah can demand payment. Otherwise, what claim does the pauper have on the rich man? Even assuming that the rich man pledged him money, this is merely an obligation to give tzedakah, which the affluent man may donate

anywhere. If the pauper indeed has a claim, it must follow that a pledge automatically includes a debt to the individual (or cause) specified. Following this line of reasoning, money pledged to one tzedakah cannot be subsequently rerouted to a different one, however legitimate the need (Shach, Choshen Mishpat 87:51; Machanei Efrayim, Hilchos Tzedakah #7).

LOCAL OR ISRAEL?

Although not all authorities accept this position of the Mordechai (cf. Shu"t Maharit #22 and #39), many later authorities do follow his ruling (Ketzos HaChoshen, 87:21). Based on this analysis, most later authorities contend that money placed in a Rabbi Meir Baal HaNes pushka may not be given, instead, to the local poor (Shu"t Maharya HaLevi #49; Shu"t Beis Yitzchak, Orach Chayim #21).

This allows us to answer our third question asked above: "I have a pushka in the house from an organization with which I have no contact. I would like to donate the money instead to my son's yeshiva, to demonstrate my hakaras hatov." The answer is that, although supporting the Torah institutions that educate our children is vital, since this money has already been designated for a specific organization, one may not transfer it to a different one.

PUSHKA BORROWERS ANONYMOUS

All of this does not answer Susan's question as to whether she may borrow money from the pushka. Even if money pledged to one institution cannot be transferred to another, until the money becomes the property of the institution, one may borrow it, as we learned before. Thus, we need to determine whether money in the pushka is already the property of the institution. Do I still have some control over it, and I may therefore borrow it, subject to the above conditions? Or, is it now the property of the tzedakah, and I may not?

This halachah depends on the following: Who owns the pushka? If I own the pushka, then placing money in the pushka requires me to donate it to tzedakah, but it is not yet their property, and I may borrow it. As I mentioned above, this situation may create liability for the funds, should they be stolen.

On the other hand, if the organization assumes that money placed in the pushka belongs to them, then I may not borrow any of that money. The reason for this is that since the pushka is their vessel, money placed inside is equivalent to being given to the gabbai, the tzedakah treasurer (based on Shulchan Aruch Choshen Mishpat 200:3). Most authorities follow this latter interpretation of the halachah.

HABITUAL BORROWERS

Some people are in the habit of borrowing money from the pushkas on a regular basis. Now, after reading my words, they may realize that this practice might be forbidden, depending on the above-mentioned circumstances. Nevertheless, there is a method whereby a person may put money into any pushka and still be able to borrow it afterwards: he should make a condition, in advance, that when he puts money into the pushka, he is not donating it to the institution, but simply pledging it to them. This way, the money is not yet the property of the institution, and one may borrow it. Although this solution will not help for the money already in the pushka, it can be used to avoid this problem in the future. Some contemporary authorities suggest that someone who usually borrows from the pushka might be considered to have made this condition from the beginning, i.e., that he is not giving the money yet to the tzedakah cause, but only pledging it (Derech Emunah, Matanos Aniyim 7:note 121).

To answer Susan's question, I would suggest that she make a condition that, henceforth, when she places money in the pushka, she is not donating it to that particular organization at this time. In so doing, she reserves the right to borrow from the pushka, although she also creates

for herself responsibility for the money, should it be stolen. She may decide that she is better off curbing her habit of borrowing from the pushka, and make an appointment to join Borrowers Anonymous.

Making change from the pushka that benefits the tzedakah is permitted in any case, such as converting the small change in the pushka to large bills (Tzedakah Umishpat Chapter 8, footnote 25, page 148).

Unfortunately, most people do not realize the complex shaylos that arise from shul appeals and pushkas – hopefully, this article will help repair this breach. May we all always be showered with berachos for contributing generously to tzedakah!
